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An Appeal
to the
Christian Medical Stu=
dents of America.

BY

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AN APPEAL TO THE CHRISTIAN MEDICAL STUDENTS OF AMERICA.

“And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness among the people.” Such is the inspired record of the labor of love of the Son of God. It has been said that “God had only one Son, and He gave Him to be a foreign missionary.” That first great Foreign Missionary was a medical missionary. He literally fulfilled his commission in preaching the gospel to the poor and deliverance to the captives. He set at liberty those who were bruised, and gave recovery of sight to the blind. He proclaimed the acceptable year of the Lord. And thus in Christ’s life there were intermingled the loving labor of making known the only remedy for the sin-sick soul and the compassionate work of relieving bodily suffering.

For this two-fold work Christ was separated, baptized, anointed. As He was, so are we to be in the world. “As the Father has sent me, even so have I sent you,” are the authoritative words of our Lord and

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Master. Again, He is heard to say, "I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you." If then we would be counted faithful, there is nothing for those of us who have the ability to do but to obey this command, "Heal the sick" and "Preach the gospel."

But where can we best fulfill the commission is the question that will immediately be asked by every honest inquirer, who has consecrated himself to the service of Christ with a willingness to go anywhere for His sake. The answer which naturally suggests itself is "*In the place of greatest need.*" If, then, we would be counted loyal to Christ, it behooves us to lose no time in *finding out that place*, and in hastening to it with the greatest possible speed.

A few facts will show where the greatest need exists. In the United States and Canada there is an average of one physician to every six hundred of the population. In heathen and Mohammedan lands there is only one qualified physician to fifteen hundred times that number; and only one missionary physician to every three and a half millions of the population.

China has only one qualified physician to every four and a half millions of the population; or, proportionately, each physician in China has seventy-five hundred times as many people to care for as each physician in America. To suppose that some time within the course of the year one in every twenty of China's population needs the services of an educated physician, this would be a very conservative estimate. Suppose, too, that one physician could treat ten thousand patients annually, which would mean about thirty thousand attendances at the hospital or dispensary. At this rate, China needs *now* eighteen hundred medical missionaries to minister to her sick and suffering population.

India has only seventy-five medical missionaries, ten less than China, and one to every three and a half millions. To continue the ratio suggested for China, and making due allowance for patients who are likely to be treated in government dispensaries, India needs *now* at least one thousand medical missionaries to bring the gospel within the reach of classes not likely to be reached by any other method of missionary work.

Continuing the suggested ratio, Africa would need another thousand; Japan, and other heathen Asiatic countries, two hundred; while Mohammedan lands could furnish work for still another thousand.

Thus, in the mere physical needs, the heathen world could fill the hands of five thousand qualified doctors of medicine, each of whom would have a territory of five thousand two hundred and seventy square miles to work in.

To endure physical suffering in a land of scientific, medical, and surgical aids, with the almost countless remedial measures, is hard enough; but to suffer, without a physician, the additional torture resulting from barbarous customs and heathen superstitions is something of which only a victim or an enlightened eye-witness can have any adequate conception. Among the common native internal remedies in vogue in China to-day are snakes, centipedes, scorpions, and even human flesh,—remedies which cause one to shudder. In India, the actual cautery is a sovereign remedy for many internal diseases, especially when pain is the prevailing symptom. The native “bibah” or marking nut is used universally as a

counter irritant. The application of this poisonous nut to the surface of the skin causes extreme pain, and leaves a scar as if seared by a red hot iron. In the writer's own short experience of five months in India, he has seen a score of persons branded from the neck to the waist with this marking nut, for the cure of abdominal and thoracic diseases. In two instances have I known death to result directly from the application of counter irritants. One of these deaths was caused by pouring kerosene oil over the diseased foot, which was then held over an open fire. Gangrene followed the frightful burn thus inflicted, and death resulted twelve days later. In the other case, this celebrated marking nut was applied to cure an injury of the foot. The result in this instance was mortification of the whole lower extremity, and death. I never saw, and can scarcely imagine, a more horrible and loathsome sight than the one which I have just related.

These are samples of native quackery in India. Could Africa's victims of native surgery and medical superstition speak, they would tell of horrors even more shocking than those of China, Siam, or India. In

Africa, cutting is the universal remedy for almost every ailment. The late Dr. Summers, while journeying through Melonge, had two children brought to him for treatment. He counted some four hundred cuts on the body of each child,—cuts inflicted with a razor in the hands of a parent and for the cure of cholera.

What is said of Africa is sadly true in unevangelized islands of the Southern Pacific. In Mohammedan lands there is still no end to life-destroying rites and cruel ceremonies performed over sick and dying.

In the light of such facts, is it to be wondered at that the missionary physician is both welcomed and appreciated as no other missionary is? Surely, then, no true friend of humanity can think of such countless sufferers without endeavoring to stretch forth a helping hand to ameliorate their sad condition.

You will find abundance of work upon reaching the field. The writer of this appeal, though in India only five months, in addition to the regular study of the language, has given nearly five thousand attendances to the sick, thus opening the way for the direct preaching of the gospel.

Well may the question be asked, "What steps are being taken by the hundreds of Christian graduates from the two hundred medical colleges in America and Canada to enter these open doors?" Hitherto the wail of woe coming over from these lands has been regarded with indifference and callousness on the part of hundreds who profess to be followers of the compassionate Saviour, and who have no substantial reason to offer for not hastening to their relief. How long shall this delay continue while we hold in our hands the only remedy for distress of soul, and thousands of remedies for the relief of the body.

Fellow students and Christian physicians, are we worthy the name of Christian physicians while we hold the power and do next to nothing to lessen the cries and dry the tears of two-thirds of the earth's physical and spiritual sufferers? To those who are ready to go, might it not be well to ask, "What effort are you making to go *now*? Are you saying, "Here am I, send me"? Then why not say, "Send me now." You are needed *now* as you never were, and may never be needed again. Moved by the

spirit of the Great Physician, will you not *now* go forth in His name to minister to body and soul of the millions for whom He suffered and died? Are you desirous of increasing your usefulness in Christ's service? Here then is your paramount opportunity. If you will determine to go, and go now, you may multiply yourself tenfold.

Do you wish to enhance your practical experience as a physician and increase your skill as a surgeon? You can do this in heathendom as you can never do in Christendom. It would be a desirable and an honorable thing to have said of you, what has been said of Dr. Kerr, the missionary physician of Canton, "He had no living peer as a surgeon." But how much more blessed, also, to have said of you, that you had walked in the footsteps of Christ, and while giving deliverance from bodily ailments you made known the only remedy for the sin-sick soul.

With the enlarged opportunity for the increase of your medical experience, you will find even greater opportunity for the development of your spiritual nature. You will find that hearts will be opened to you that have been closed to all other mission-

aries, and for your sake other workers will be tolerated,—workers whose subsequent labors may result in mighty victories for Christ. An ordained missionary recently said, “If I were a physician I would have a hundred to preach to where I now have ten.”

In a word, you may become the pioneer missionary to countries, provinces, cities, towns, villages, and homes, which, but for your labor and influence, might continue to exist and die out without the knowledge of a full salvation in Christ. You may disarm the people of whole settlements of their anti-foreign and anti-christian prejudices, and thereby win the way for the direct preaching of the Cross.

Brothers, in conclusion, let us remember that, if we are to become true representatives of our absent Lord, our medical work must point men to the Lamb of God; otherwise it will come to naught. Let us remember that men are God’s ordained means to save souls and to evangelize the world. What the Lord of missions needs, then, is men full of His own spirit and overflowing with His love. “It hath pleased God by the foolishness of preach-

ing to save them that believe." "Not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." "When we are weak, then are we strong."

"The world for Christ in the present generation," is the watch-cry of the Student Volunteer Movement. Let it be said of the medical volunteers, that they are bravely doing their part in this great conquest for Christ and the world's speedy evangelization.

That this year may witness a greater outflow of volunteers to foreign lands and a mightier inflow of blessing from heaven upon the Church at home than in any previous year of missionary history, is the humble but expectant prayer of a volunteer already in the field.

"Will you not offer yourself to-day;
To-day while
It may be, that when you would give up all,
It will be at the end of the strife."

W. J. WANLESS.

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